

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes of December 9, 2021**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Julie H. Goodrich, Nathaniel Miller, Charles Morse, and John Stevens. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Laurie Baroffio (Finance Director), Trent Tucker (Highway Foreman), Bruce Wright (Cemetery Contractor), Cas Vaicaitis, Carolyn Stevens, and Elroy Hill.

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m. Participants had the option of attending the meeting either in person or remotely through Go-to-Meeting.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE.** Those persons present were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The remote contingent also participated as much as possible.

- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.

IV. DISCUSSION

a. Proposed FY 2022/2023 Town Budget

- 1. Highway Department.** Manager Schulz presented a summary of the Highway Department operations and maintenance (O&M) budget noting that the wages as shown in the budget are increasing 6.7% per the union contract, which requires a wage increase based on COLA and one step. The wages likely will be higher when the final COLA figures are released. However, the overall personnel costs are up only 1.8% due to a reduction in health insurance costs.

Next, Manager Schulz noted that the material supply expenditures are nearly level funded as several items are slightly increased and others are slightly decreased based on actuals. Board member Miller asked about the \$5,000 reduction in Mud Season stone. Manager Schulz responded that the reduction was based on actuals and Highway Foreman Trent Tucker was comfortable with the lower amount.

Next, Manager Schulz presented the Highway Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget noting that \$20,000 of surplus was used to increase the guardrail budget due to increased requests by the community. \$130,000 was included for the repairs to the Stony Brook Bridge and \$150,000 was added for the Main Street Bridge Project. A total of \$110,000 was added to sidewalks to cover the shortfall from Main Street sidewalk and for the construction of a concrete sidewalk on a portion of Central Street from Wall Street to the last business. \$210,000 was included for the paving of Central Street and West Hill Road, which has an estimated cost of \$260,000.

Manager Schulz then discussed the Highway Capital Equipment Plan (CEP), noting funds were added to purchase a new grader in FY22/23, which has an estimated cost of \$300,000. Chair Maxwell asked if the plan is to keep the current grader and Mr. Tucker said he would like to keep it. Board member Stevens asked about the increased funds for the purchase of the vehicle lifts, which were scheduled for purchase this year. Mr. Tucker noted that the cost has greatly increased and additional funds are needed. Next, Manager Schulz stated that the budget includes a new/used loader to replace the Kawasaki Loader which is twenty (20) years old and in poor condition. Chair Maxwell asked for more details on the loader purchase and Manager Schulz noted that the plan is to borrow for the loader over (10) ten years. The loader will be shared with the Sewer Department.

2. **Town Garage.** Manager Schulz discussed the Town Garage and Facility budget noting no significant adjustments in funding for the O&M budget and facilities.
3. **Cemetery.** Manager Schulz noted that the Cemetery budget includes no increases. The cemetery care contract includes a 3% increase. Board member Goodrich asked if \$3,000 was a sufficient amount for tree removal. Bruce Wright responded that the amount was adequate.
4. **Library/Historical Society Building.** Manager Schulz stated that the Library/Historic Building O&M budget is increasing by \$500. The CIP is increasing \$12,500 to fund the new furnace and continued funding for future roof repairs. Manager Schulz asked Board member Stevens, who also serves as Treasurer on the Brown Public Library's Board of Trustees, if he was comfortable with the proposed CIP budget. Board member Stevens responded that the budget looks good and added that the library has obtained a grant from Efficiency Vermont to replace the lighting, which will lower electric costs.
5. **Municipal Building.** Manager Schulz discussed the Municipal Building budget noting no significant adjustments in funding for the O&M and the buildings budgets.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED). There was none.

VI. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Stevens, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Schulz

Jeff Schulz, Acting Clerk

These minutes were revised and approved at the Select Board regular meeting of January 11, 2022.